

**No. 6-2006 MONTHLY PACIFIC ENSO DISCUSSION FOR MICRONESIA
AND AMERICAN SAMOA**

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The Pacific ENSO Applications Center (PEAC) disseminated the second quarter 2006 newsletter (refer to <http://lumahai.soest.hawaii.edu/Enso/index.html>). Oceanic conditions in the region have changed from La Niña to ENSO-neutral. The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) stated the following in its June 8, 2006 *ENSO Diagnostic Discussion* (refer to <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>): “The current patterns of anomalous ocean temperatures are consistent with ENSO-neutral conditions in the tropical Pacific. During May 2006 SSTs were near average at most locations between the date line (180°) and 90°W, which is reflected in the near zero departures [anomalies] observed in all the Niño regions.” Some weak residual atmospheric characteristics of La Niña are still apparent in the western North Pacific, such as stronger than normal trade winds across the basin and tropical cyclone development constrained to the western end of the basin.

Most of the latest climate forecast models predict ENSO-neutral conditions in the tropical Pacific through the end of 2006. However, as the CPC points out, “the spread of these forecasts (weak La Niña to weak El Niño) indicates considerable uncertainty in the outlook for the last half of the year. Climate forecast models generally have diminished skill in their predictions from March through June; improved skill should occur next month.

For the next few weeks, tropical cyclone development and movement patterns for Micronesia will likely be displaced toward the west due to lingering, but weakening, atmospheric effects of La Niña. They should return to normal by July or August. The tropical cyclone season should be over for American Samoa. Sea levels will be slightly higher than normal due to the above average trade winds. The trade wind trough has been re-established over southern Micronesia, and rainfall should return to normal for most areas south of 12°N by the end of June and for the Mariana Islands by the end of July. Rains are slowly returning to the northern Marshall Islands, but residents are encouraged to conserve water for the next few weeks. Rainfall in American Samoa should remain near normal as the islands move into their dry season.

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Coordinated with the Climate Prediction Center and the Pacific ENSO Applications Center.